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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
ICA-11 AID-05 /085 W
----------055798 100319Z /61/73
R 081735Z MAY UI
FM AMCONSUL CURACAO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3710
INTO RUDKGPQ/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE 421

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CURACO 0326

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (FOR SECTION INFO)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, PEPR, PINT, MARR, MORG, NA, NL
SUBJECT: MINISTER VAN DER STEE'S ORIENTATION TRIP TO
THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

REF: (A) CURACAO A-05, (B) 0224

1. SUMMARY. THE APRIL 9-21 VISIT HERE OF THE DUTCH MINISTER FOR ANTILLEAN AFFAIRS AND STATE SECRETARY IN THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, INVOLVING "TRIANGULAR" TALKS AMONG REPRESENTATIVES OF HOLLAND, THE ANTILLES AND ARUBA, WITH GREAT EXPECTATION, IF NOT APPREHENSION; WENT OFF WITH EMANATIONS OF FEVERISH ACTIVITY; AND PASSED SOMEWHAT INCHOATELY INTO HISTORY. IF THE ARUBA SITUATION, AND PARTICULARLY BETICO CROES' VISIT TO HOLLAND LAST SEPTEMBER, WERE THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF THE TRIP, CLEARLY THE DISCUSSIONS COVERED PRACTICALLY EVERY FACET OF THE DUTCH CONNECTION. THE PURPOSE OF THE VISIT WAS BILLED IN ADVANCE AS "ORIENTATION," NOT NEGOTIATIONS, AND THAT IS THE WAY VAN DER STEE DESCRIBED IT AS HE LEFT. NEVERTHELESS, SOME FAIRLY DISTURBING RESONANCES WERE HEARD IN STATEMENTS MADE BY THE DUTCH VISITORS. SOME PRACTICAL DECISIONS WERE TAKEN, PARTICULARLY IN THE DEFENSE AREA. END SUMMARY.
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2. ARUBA SITUATION. VAN DER STEE STUCK TO THE LINE THAT HIS VISIT WAS FOR ORIENTATION PURPOSES ONLY. HE ITERATED HIS GOVERNMENT'S PREVIOUS POSITION (ALSO THAT OF THE PRECEDING GOVERNMENT) THAT HOLLAND'S STARTING POINT IN CONSIDERING THE ANTILLES IS THAT ALL SIX ISLANDS MUST BE REGARDED AS AN ENTITY. BUT HE ALSO SAID THAT THE ARUBA ISSUE IS NO LONGER AN INTERNAL

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ANTILLEAN MATTER BUT HAD BECOME "A KINGDOM AFFAIR" AND THAT
A SEPARATE ARRANGEMENT FOR ARUBA IS "DISCUSSABLE." FOR BETICO CRIES
THESE WORDS REPRESENT SOMEWHAT OF AN ADVANCE, AND THAT IS THE
GOOD NEWS. ON THE OTHER HAND, VAN DER STEE SAYS HE BELIEVES
IT POSSIBLE TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THE ROZENDAL GOVERNMENT'S
PLATFORM AND THE MEP POSITION ON ARUBA'S FUTURE, AND THAT IS
THE BAD NEWS. BETICO COULDN'T BUY THAT PROPOSITION FOR A
MINUTE (SEE CURACAO 0224).
3. ANTILLEAN INDEPENDENCE. THE PRESENT DUTCH GOVERNMENT
CLEARLY WANTS TO PORTRAY ITSELF AS PRESENTING A DECIDEDLY
SOFTER APPROACH TO THIS MATTER THAN PREDECESSOR GOVERNMENTS.
STRESS IS CONSTANTLY ON THE POINT THAT INDEPENDENCE IS
SOMETHING THAT SHOULD BE EXCLUSIVELY DETERMINED BY THE ANTILLES.
YET THROUGHOUT THE VISIT THE LOCAL PRESS REPORTED STATEMENTS
ATTRIBUTED TO THE VISITORS TO THE EFFECT THAT INDEPENDENCE
WILL COME, MUST COME. ONE INTERESTING SIDELIGHT ON THE MATTER
OF ANTILLEAN INDEPENCENCE WAS PROVIDED BY ISAAC DE BROT, AN
ANTILLEAN, A FORMER DUTCH AMBASSADOR IN CHILE, AND AN OLD FRIEND
AND FRATERNITY COLLEAGUE OF PM VAN AGT. ACCORDING TO DE BROT,
A REAL CONSIDERATION BUT UNMENTIONABLE IN PUBLIC HAS TO DO WITH
ANY POSSIBLE FUTURE WAR SITUATION IN EUROPE. THERE APPARENTLY
IS CONSIDERABLE ABASHMENT IN HOLLAND OVER THE FACT THAT IN WWII
THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT FLED IN EXILE TO LONDON. BEING EQUAL PARTS
OF THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS, THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES
WOULD PROVIDE IN ANY FUTURE WAR A PIECE OF DUTCH SOIL TO WHICH
THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT COULD REPAIR WITHOUT SHAME OR THE SUFFERANCE
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EVEN OF A FRIENDLY COUNTRY. FOR THIS REASON, ACCORDING TO
DE BROT, THERE IS RELUCTANCE IN HOLLAND TO PART WITH THE LAST
OVERSEAS DUTCH SOIL, EVEN IF IT COSTS THE DUTCH TAXPAYER.

4. DUTCH ASSISTANCE, A NUMBER OF POINTS ON DUTCH ASSISTANCE
EMERGED: DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE
ANTILLES AND WILL NOT BE SOLVED BY THE DUTCH. DUTCH ASSISTANCE
WILL CONTINUE AND WILL ADDRESS ITSELF PRIMARILY TO THE PROBLEM
OF UNEMPLOYMENT BUT WILL ALSO APPLY TO DIRECT SUPPORT OF THE
COSTS OF THE ANTILLEAN GOVERNMENT. BUT IT IS A FACT, SAID
VAN DER STEE, THAT WITHIN A SHORT TIME A SOLUTION MUST BE
FOUND FOR THIS (UNEMPLOYMENT) SITUATION. NEW SYSTEMS FOR
ACCELERATING THE DELIVERY OF ASSISTANCE AFTER NEEDS ARE
ESTABLISHED ARE TO BE ADOPTED, WITH "SHORTENED" COMMUNICATIONS
LINES. DUTCH ASSISTANCE WILL ALSO AIM AT PREPARATIONS FOR
INDEPENDENCE, PARTICULARLY IN THE AREA OF TRAINING GOVERNMENT
OFFICIALS. VAN DER STEE'S WHOLE DISCUSSION OF ASSISTANCE
REEKED OF ITS ESSENTIALLY SHORT-TERM AND ANCILLARY (TO NAG
EFFORTS) NATURE. THIS TREATMENT CONTRASTS WITH PRIME MINISTER
ROZENDAL'S CONVEPTION. WHEN HE EXPRESSED IT IN HOLLAND
EARLIER IN THE YEAR, HE SUGGESTED THAT DUTCH DEVELOPMENT
ASSISTANCE MUST BE "EVERLASTING." VAN DER STEE'S STATEMENTS

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THUS HAD DISTURBING RESONANCES FOR THE ANTILLEANS, WHO WERE
THEREFORE GRATEFUL TO HEAR THAT THEY ALONE SHOULD DECIDE
WHEN INDEPENDENCE SHALL COME.

5. DEFENSE MATTERS. A CONSIDERABLE FOCUS OF THE VISIT CON-
CERNED THE MILITARY SPHERE. THE MAJOR QUESTIONS CONCERNED

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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ICA-11 AID-05 /085 W
----------058712 101029Z /16
R 081735Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL CURACAO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3871
INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 CURACAO 0326
THE ANTILLEAN DEFENSE BRIGADE; SPECIFIC POINTS RELATED TO
ITS DEPLOYMENT AND TRAINING, ITS RELATION TO THE DUTCH MARINE
FORCE HERE, AND THE LATTER'S ROLE IN CASES OF CIVIL DISTURBANCE
IN LIGHT OF THE ADB'S COMING INTO EXISTENCE LATER THIS YEAR.
ARUBAN ATTITUDES RAISED SOME PROBLEMS, SINCE POLITICIANS ON
THAT ISLAND HAVE BEEN DETERMINEDLY PROPAGATING THE FEAR THAT
THE ADB IS REALLY A CURACAO EFFORT TO CREATE A FORCE THAT
CAN BE USED AGAINST ARUBA SHOULD TENSIONS RISE AGAIN, AS
THEY DID LAST SUMMER. IF OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ANALYSIS
OF COMMODORE GONGGRIJP, FLAG OFFICER OF THE NETHERLANDS
ANTILLES, IS CORRECT, THE ADB WILL RECEIVE GUIDANCE IN ITS
TRAINING FROM HIMSELF AND THE DUTCH FORCES, BUT WILL BE
THEORETICALLY INDEPENDENT OF HIS COMMAND. WHILE RECRUITS
MAY BE SHIFTED FOR TRAINING PURPOSES FROM ONE ISLAND TO
ANOTHER, UNITS ON DUTY WILL BE COMPOSED OF LOCAL CITIZENS.
CERTAIN NEW ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN DECIDED ON THE COMMAND
STRUCTURE HERE. IN ESSENCE, THE DUTCH MARINES HAVE BEEN
INTEGRATED INTO FONLANTILLES' COMMAND, THE MARINE'S CO
TAKING OVER AS FONLANTILLES' CHIEF OF STAFF. GONGGRIJP
ALSO NOTED THAT DURING THE VISIT A FINAL DECISION WAS MADE
ON HIS SUCCESSOR; THE CHANGE OF COMMAND WILL TAKE PLACE IN
AUGUST.
PENBERTHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INDEPENDENCE, MINISTERIAL VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, DEFENSIVE CAPABILITIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978CURACA00326
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780211-0853, D780196-1124
Format: TEL
From: CURACAO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780584/aaaactll.tel
Line Count: 168
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: e0e9b4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 CURACAO A-5
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 02 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2765369
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINISTER VAN DER STEE\'S ORIENTATION TRIP TO THE NETHERLANDS ANTILLES
TAGS: PDEV, PEPR, PINT, MARR, MORG, OVIP, PDIP, NA, NL, (VAN DER STEE, A P J M), (VAN DER STEE)
To: STATE THE HAGUE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e0e9b4a2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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20 Mar 2014
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